

Testimony on Raised Senate Bill No. 234

**AN ACT CONCERNING THE LOCATION OF A FIREARMS TRAINING FACILITY**

Public Hearing – March 3, 2016

Public Safety Committee

I am writing to you to express my support of Raised Bill. 234: **AN ACT CONCERNING THE LOCATION OF A FIREARMS TRAINING FACILITY.**

I wish to thank the Public Safety and Security Committee for considering such a bill. It is time for the State of Connecticut to do what every household does when there is a need to economize: use what is available to the greatest extent and avoid any new purchases. This bill seems to support this principle. Using existing facilities will help both the police and the state's economy. When this study is completed everyone will have a better understanding of what is really needed by our police and what is available to fulfill these needs.

All of the discussion about design assumes that the entire facility will be at one location. I am asking: do the classrooms actually have to be at the same location as the shooting range or could they be nearby at another site? This might allow for greater flexibility in determining a suitable location.

I have two major concerns that do not seem to be addressed in this bill: Who will actually make the final decision concerning the design of the facility and the accessibility of the final location.

The Department of Administrative Services has said that the facility will not have baffles or other sound-abatement features. I cannot understand why this department has chosen to ignore noise pollution as a factor in the construction. I wonder who actually made this decision and whether this person has the background to make such a decision. An engineer with experience in sound abatement needs to be consulted and his/her recommendations followed. I understand that the construction of baffles is addressed in Raised Bill 235, but I think it needs to be included here, in this bill, since the baffles are a major safety feature.

My second concern involves the physical accessibility of the facility. It needs to be located where there are major highways nearby. I am from Willington, Connecticut. The only major road leading to Willington is I-84. If you do not live along this corridor, the trip to Willington can be long and arduous, especially in inclement weather. From the southeastern part of the state, the trip includes many two-lane roads which can be quite slow, especially during rush hour. A typical trip to the shore from Willington takes a minimum of 1 ¼ hours. A trip to Willington from the southwest corner of the state can take over two hours. Is it reasonable to expect a trooper to spend four hours on the road to attend one day of training?

Thank you for this opportunity to voice my concerns and opinions.

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